

A list of the jurisdictional subdivisions of Virginia, with abbreviations, showing their parentage and jurisdictional life dates.

Listed below are all the political subdivisions ever created directly subordinate to the state or colony of Virginia from 1634 on. Thus the types of jurisdictions included in the list below are counties, districts, independent cities, and for the early colonial period, shires. Included are all the counties and districts that were later subdivided, and/or spun off to the states of Kentucky and West Virginia, or ceded to Pennsylvania, and to the United States as a whole to create the Northwest Territories.

For each of these political subdivisions I have shown the parental subdivision(s) from which they were created, and the exact date the county or other subdivision officially came into existence, and where applicable, the exact date it became extinct, so far as modern sources have revealed these dates. This range of dates thus represents the theoretical period for which each jurisdiction may have created records, and where known, I have supplemented the birth date with the actual date of the first court session or other records for the jurisdiction.

## HISTORY OF VIRGINIA JURISDICTIONS

### Hundreds, Shires, then Counties

The colony was first organized into hundreds, each represented by one or two burgesses. In 1634 it was reorganized into eight “shires”, which left out a number of people living in such Indian districts as Chickcoan, which was referred to as “Northumberland County” by Feb 1645, and was formally made such in 1648. Since Northumberland from the beginning encompassed all of the unsettled territory, most of VA’s counties have Northumberland as their ultimate parent. The first addition to the roster of shires, New Norfolk, was apparently called a “county” from its beginning in 1636.

Scattered settlers lived beyond the organized jurisdictions throughout the colonial period. The Revolution brought western war with the British-incited Indians and prompted the brief and informal establishment of West Augusta Administrative District. The dynamic and chaotic westward migrations in the War’s aftermath required the erection of the Kentucky (Administrative) District as well. I list these districts at the bottom of this document, and type their abbreviations with a “D” suffix.

As the country settled into the Federal period, VA ceded large chunks of western lands to other states and to the United States. All these lands had been formerly designated VA Counties, which thereupon became extinct as their land passed to other jurisdictions. In particular, Illinois County, Virginia, became the Northwest Territory.

On 1 Jun 1792, Kentucky was recognized by the US Congress as an independent state, and thereby acquired jurisdiction over some ten of the counties originally organized by Virginia

During the Civil War, some 48 of the counties constituting the trans-Allegheny NW portion of Virginia effectively seceded from the rest of the State. On 20 Jun 1863 these counties were re-constituted as the State of West Virginia.

Since the following list includes a few counties from what have become independent states, it should not be surprising that a number of the county abbreviations are identical; this should not cause any ambiguity since they will normally be qualified by their respective state names or two-letter state codes.

### Independent Cities

Virginia, alone among the states, is comprised in the first place, not just of counties (or of townships, as are “township states”), but of counties and independent cities. Independent cities have their own governments and do not fall under any counties jurisdictionally (although their records often repose with the county of which they are geographically a part). This tradition of independent cities dates back to the Revolutionary War, when the City of Williamsburg and the Borough of Norfolk were already established. State law governing independent cities has evolved to the point where any town of 10,000 people or more can elect to incorporate as an independent city (incorporated towns or non-independent cities remain jurisdictionally under the county they reside in). McGinnis, in *Virginia Genealogy* tells us that (as of 1993) there were 41 independent cities, but this list may have grown since then.

Although some independent cities and counties have the same names, and some county names actually end with the word “City” (eg. “Charles City” County), they are adequately distinguished here by the length of their

abbreviations, eg. “AlexVA” for Alexandria County, and “AlexCVA” for the independent city of Alexandria, VA. I have merged the independent cities listed in McGinnis into the following county list, but flagged them by appending (CITY) to their names to distinguish them from counties and any other jurisdictions that may have “City” as part of their formal name.

## THE COMPONENTS OF EACH LIST ENTRY

Counties that were spun off to form the states of Kentucky or West Virginia, are flagged with the letters “k” or “w” at the beginning of the line for each jurisdictional entry.

## Jurisdictional ABBREVIATIONS

I have created a unique 4-5 character abbreviation for each county, city, or shire—unique except for the few cases where the name of a county that was spun off to Kentucky in 1792, was re-used for one of the western counties that seceded in 1763 to form the state of West Virginia. When combined with the corresponding unique state codes (KY and WV) a truly unique county designator is regained.

In cases where there is a county and an independent city of the same name, the suffix “C” (making the abbreviation 5 characters long) designates the (City).

In creating these abbreviations, I have devised a mechanical procedure, in which the first, and preferred, method of creating a unique abbreviation is to simply truncate the name to four characters, so that few abbreviations have to be memorized; in practice this simple rule has sufficed to generate a unique abbreviation for the vast majority of names. Where this first attempt fails, the next step is to truncate each of the names to the first four consonants, or, where the name consists of two words, to two sets of two consonants. In abbreviating names that include the directional qualifiers North, West, etc., or Upper and Lower, whether these are syllables or entire words, these strings have been abbreviated to their corresponding first letters, capitalized: thus the abbreviation for South Norfolk County, becomes “SNrf”.

## Jurisdictional NAMES

The names of shires or independent cities are identified as such by the suffix (SHIRE) or (CITY); all other names are county names.

## Jurisdictional Date Ranges

The outside bounds for this date range are the jurisdiction’s life span dates—its birth date being the legislatively specified birth date of a jurisdiction, and, if the jurisdiction is scheduled for extinction in favor a new jurisdiction, the legislatively mandated end date. Where the legislation itself fails to specify a birth date or end date, I have specified instead the date the legislation was approved as recorded in the journal of the House of Burgesses (a.k.a. the Virginia Assembly). I have shown these dates below, in the form (BirthDate - DeathDate).

However, what the researcher cares about most are the dates the records actually begin for that jurisdiction. Since all jurisdictions sooner or later spawn many records series, there are likely to be many such records start dates. McGinnis provides much useful information about the start dates of particular record series for most of the jurisdictions listed below, and the interested reader is referred to her book for that information. Here, though, I have just the date of the *earliest* known and extant records series for each jurisdiction. Quite often the records of a jurisdiction, especially in colonial times, begin with a single court record book into which all records are entered, so that the first date in this book marks the beginning of actual county or city administration in that area.

For example, when Augusta Count was ordered by the Virginia House of Burgesses to begin its formal existence as of Nov1838, there were too few settlers beyond the mountains to make a formal establishment worthwhile; consequently, the affairs of those settlers continued to be administered by the parent county of Orange, until 30Oct1745, when the first county officers’ commissions were recorded, or until 9Dec1745, the date of the first county court session—take your pick. I know this because I’m familiar with the early court records of Augusta and Orange.

In this case, and a few others, I’ve therefore expanded the date range format to capture the 1<sup>st</sup> dates of record, thus:

(BirthDate:1stRecordsDate - DeathDate).

The entries in the list for independent cities show the jurisdictional birth dates for those entities as independent cities, but in most cases, records for the cities predate these jurisdictional dates, sometimes by many decades. In such case, in keeping with my focus on records dates here, I have appended these earlier record dates to the later dates on which the jurisdiction was created as an independent city, e.g. "(7May1852: 1780)".

I have double dated the year for all dates prior to 1752, and from 1Jan-24Mar.

### Jurisdictional Genealogy

Jurisdictions created from others are indicated below by the prefix FROM, followed by a list of the parent jurisdiction(s) (usually counties), separated by "+" signs if there are more than one.

Provision of a Jurisdictional Death Date followed by the TO prefix, and a new jurisdictional name (or names connected by "+"s, implies that the subject jurisdiction has gone extinct in favor of its TO progeny.

Many, if not most cessions of territory indicated by FROM or TO are only partial; supplemental partial cessions that occur after the TO county is already in existence, are enclosed in square brackets, along with the date of cession where known, e.g.

**Amhe Amherst (1May1761-) FROM Albemarle [Augusta-1770]**

Note, though, that transfers of territory from continuing counties are shown only in the FROM direction; to determine all the counties to which a given county has contributed, one must scan the entire list for the FROM county name.

Some jurisdictions have simply been RENAMED, or CONSOLIDATED with others.

Independent cities are linked to the surrounding counties they once were once a part of by the prefix WITHIN, e.g.

**RoanC Roanoke (CITY) (1884-) WITHIN Roanoke**

or associated with several neighboring counties by the prefix ADJACENT, e.g.

**AlexC Alexandria (CITY) (7May1852: 1780) ADJACENT Arlington + Fairfax**

### VIRGINIA COUNTIES, SHIRES, and INDEPENDENT CITIES

Jurisdiction Name (birth date : earliest records date - death date)

k =now KY

w =now WV

Acco Accomack (bef23Mar1661/2:21Apr1663-)  
 Acca Accawmack (SHIRE) (1634-1642/3) TO Northampton  
 Albe Albemarle (1Jan1744/5:28Feb1744/5) FROM Goochland [Louisa-1762, Augusta-1770]  
 Alex Alexandria (13Mar1847-) FROM the USA (a re-cession)  
 AlexC Alexandria (CITY) (7May1852: 1780) ADJACENT Arlington + Fairfax  
 Alle Alleghany (5Jan1822-) FROM Bath + Botetourt + Monroe  
 Amel Amelia (25Mar1735-) FROM PrinceGeorge + Brunswick  
 Amhe Amherst (1May1761-) FROM Albemarle [Augusta-1770]  
 Appo Appomattox (8Feb1845) FROM Buckingham + PrinceEdward + Charlotte + Campbell  
 w Augu Augusta (15Dec1738:30Oct1745 (justices commissioned/9Dec1745 (1st court) FROM Orange  
 Barb Barbour (3Mar1843-) FROM Harrison + Lewis + Randolph  
 Bath Bath (1May1791-) FROM Augusta + Botetourt + Greenbrier  
 Bedf Bedford (10May1754-) FROM Lunenburg, [Albemarle]  
 BedfC Bedford (CITY) (31Aug1968-) WITHIN Bedford  
 w Berk Berkeley (15May1772-) FROM Frederick  
 Blan Bland (30Mar1861-) FROM Giles + Wythe + Tazewell  
 w Boon Boone (11Mar1847-) FROM Kanawha + Cabell + Logan  
 Bote Botetourt (31Jan1770-) FROM Augusta [+ Rockbridge 1785]  
 k Bour Bourbon (1May1786-) FROM Fayette  
 w Brax Braxton (15Jan1836-) FROM Lewis + Kanawha + Nicholas [Randolph]  
 BrisC Bristol (CITY) (1890) WITHIN Washington (County)  
 w Broo Brooke (30Nov1796-) FROM Ohio  
 Brun Brunswick (1May1721:2May1732-) FROM PrinceGeorge [Surry-1733, IsleOfWight-1733]  
 Buch Buchanan (16Feb1858-) FROM Tazewell + Russell

	Buck	Buckingham (1May1762-) FROM Albemarle
	BuenC	BuenaVista (CITY) (1892-) WITHIN Rockbridge
w	Cabe	Cabell (2Jan1809-) FROM Kanawha
w	Calh	Calhoun (5Mar1856-) FROM Gilmer
	Camp	Campbell (1Feb1782-) FROM Bedford
	Caro	Caroline (1May1728-) FROM Essex + King&Queen + KingWilliam
	Carr	Carroll (17Jan1842-) FROM Grayson, [Patrick]
	ChCt	CharlesCity (SHIRE) (1634-)
	ChRv	CharlesRiver (SHIRE) (1634-1642/3) RENAMED York
	Char	Charlotte (1Mar1765-) FROM Lunenburg
	CharC	Charlottesville (CITY) (1888) WITHIN Albemarle
	Chst	Chesterfield (26May1749-) FROM Henrico
	ChspC	Chesapeake (CITY) (1Jan1963-) FROM Norfolk + City of S.Norfolk
	ClFrC	CliftonForge (CITY) (1906-) WITHIN Allegheny
	Clar	Clarke (8Mar1836) FROM Frederick, [Warren]
w	Clay	Clay (29Mar1858-) FROM Braxton + Nicholas
	ClHgC	ColonialHeights (CITY) (1948-) WITHIN Chesterfield
	CoviC	Covington (CITY) (1952-) WITHIN Allegheny
	Crai	Craig (21Mar1851-) FROM Botetourt + Roanoke + Giles + Monroe, Montgomery, Alleghany]
	Culp	Culpeper (18May1749-) FROM Orange
	Cumb	Cumberland (21May1749-) FROM Goochland
	DanvC	Danville (CITY) (1890-) WITHIN Pittsylvania
	Dick	Dickenson (27Feb1880-) FROM Russell + Wise + Buchanan
	Dinw	Dinwiddie (1May1752-) FROM PrinceGeorge
w	Dodd	Doddridge (4Feb1845-) FROM Harrison + Tyler + Ritchie + Lewis
	Dunm	Dunmore (15May1772:26May1772-) RENAMED Shenandoah 1Feb1778 FROM Frederick
	ElCt	ElizabethCity (SHIRE) (1634-1Jul1952) TO Hampton (CITY)
	EmpoC	Emporia (CITY) (1967-) WITHIN Greenville
	Esse	Essex (26Apr1692-) FROM (Old)Rappahannock
	Fair	Fairfax (1Dec1742-) FROM PrinceWilliam
	FairC	Fairfax (CITY) (1961-) WITHIN Fairfax
	FlChC	FallsChurch (CITY) (1948-) WITHIN Fairfax
	Fauq	Fauquier (1May1759) FROM PrinceWilliam
k	Faye	Fayette (1Nov1780-) FROM Kentucky
w	Faye	Fayette2 (28Feb1831-) FROM Logan + Greenbrier + Nicholas + Kanawha
	Finc	Fincastle (1Dec1772-31Dec1776) FROM Botetourt TO Washington + Montgomery + Kentucky
	Floy	Floyd (15Jan1831-) FROM Montgomery, [Franklin]
	Fluv	Fluvanna (3Jun1777-) FROM Albemarle
	Fran	Franklin (1Jan1786-) FROM Bedford + Henry, [Patrick-1847]
	FranC	Franklin (CITY) (1961-) WITHIN Southampton
	Fred	Frederick (15Dec1738:11Nov1743-) FROM Orange, [Augusta]
	GalaC	Galax (CITY) (1953-) ADJACENT Carroll + Grayson
	Gile	Giles (16Jan1806-) FROM Montgomery + Monroe + Tazewell, [Wythe, Mercer, Craig]
w	Gilm	Gilmer (3Feb1845-) FROM Lewis + Kanawha
	Glou	Gloucester (1651-) FROM York
	Gooc	Goochland (1May1727-) FROM Henrico
	Gray	Grayson (1May1793-) FROM Wythe, [Patrick]
w	Grnb	Greenbrier (1Mar1778-) FROM Botetourt + Montgomery
	Grne	Greene (24Jan1838-) FROM Orange
	Grns	Greensville (1Feb1782-) FROM Brunswick, [Sussex]
	Hali	Halifax (10May1752-) FROM Lunenburg
w	Hamp	Hampshire (1May1754-) FROM Augusta + Frederick, [Augusta-1778, Hardy]
	HampC	Hampton (CITY) (1908:1684-) FROM Elizabeth City
w	Hanc	Hancock (15Jan1848-) FROM Brooke
	Hano	Hanover (1May1721-) FROM NewKent
w	Hard	Hardy (1Feb1786-) FROM Hampshire
w	Harr	Harrison (20Jul1784-) FROM Monongalia [Randolph. Ohio]
	HarrC	Harrisonburg (CITY) (1916-) in Rockingham
	Hnrc	Henrico (SHIRE) (1634:1677-)
	Hnry	Henry (1Jan1777-) FROM Pittsylvania, [Patrick]
	High	Highland (19Mar1847-) FROM Pendleton + Bath
	HopeC	Hopewell (CITY) (1916-) in PrinceGeorge
	Illi	Illinois (9Dec1778-1Mar1784) land on NW side OhioRiv TO USA (as Northwest Terr.)
	IsOW	IsleOfWight (1637-) RENAMED FROM Warrosquyoake (SHIRE), [UpperNorfolk, Nansemond]

w Jack Jackson (1Mar1831-) FROM Mason + Kanawha + Wood, [Wirt]  
 JmCt JamesCity (SHIRE) (1634-) FROM [NewKent, York]  
 k Jeff Jefferson (1Nov1780-) FROM Kentucky  
 w Jeff Jefferson (8Jan1801-) FROM Berkeley  
 w Kana Kanawha (1Oct1789-) FROM Greenbrier + Montgomery, [Fayette]  
 k Kent Kentucky (1Jan1777-30Jun1780) FROM Fincastle TO Jefferson + Fayette + Lincoln  
 Kn&Q King & Queen (12May1691-) FROM NewKent  
 KnGr KingGeorge (23Apr1721-) FROM Richmond, [Westmoreland]  
 KnWl KingWilliam (12Apr1702-) FROM King&Queen  
 Lanc Lancaster (1651:1Jan1651/2-) FROM Northumberland, York  
 Lee\_ Lee (13May1793-) FROM Russell, [Scott]  
 w Lewi Lewis (18Dec1816-) FROM Harrison, [Randolph]  
 LexiC Lexington (CITY) (1Jan1966-) WITHIN Rockbridge  
 k Linc Lincoln (1Nov1780-) FROM Kentucky  
 w Loga Logan (12Jan1824-) FROM Giles + Cabell + Tazewell + Kanawha  
 Loud Loudoun (1Jul1757-) FROM Fairfax  
 Loui Louisa (1Dec1742-) FROM Hanover  
 LNrf LowerNorfolk (1637-15May1691) FROM NewNorfolk TO PrincessAnne + Norfolk  
 Lune Lunenburg (1May1746-) FROM Brunswick, [Charlotte-1777 re-cession]  
 LyncC Lynchburg (CITY) (1852:1805-) WITHIN Campbell  
 w McDo McDowell (20Feb1858-) FROM Tazewell  
 k Madi Madison (1Aug1786-) FROM Lincoln  
 Madi Madison (1May1793-) FROM Culpeper  
 ManaC Manassas (CITY) (1975-) WITHIN PrinceWilliam  
 MnPkC ManassasPark (CITY) (1975-) WITHIN PrinceWilliam  
 w Mari Marion (14Jan1842-) FROM Monongalia + Harrison  
 w Mars Marshall (12Mar1835-) FROM Ohio  
 MartC Martinsville (CITY) (1928-) WITHIN Henry  
 k Maso Mason (1May1789-) FROM Bourbon  
 w Maso Mason (3Jan1804-) FROM Kanawha  
 Math Mathews (1May1791-) FROM Gloucester  
 Meck Mecklenburg (1Mar1765-) FROM Lunenburg  
 k Merc Mercer (1Aug1786-) FROM Lincoln  
 w Merc Mercer (17Mar1837-) FROM Giles + Tazewell  
 Msex Middlesex (:2Feb1673/4-) FROM Lancaster  
 Mono Monongalia (9Nov1776-) FROM West Augusta District [Preston] TO PA-1786  
 Monr Monroe (15Jan1799-) FROM Greenbrier, [Botetourt]  
 Mont Montgomery (1Jan1777-) FROM Fincastle, [Botetourt, Pulaski]  
 w Morg Morgan (9Feb1820-) FROM Berkeley + Hampshire  
 Nans Nansemond (1642-Jul1972) RENAMED FROM UpperNorfolk TO Nansemond (CITY)  
 NansC Nansemond (CITY) (Jul1972-1Jan1974) TO Suffolk (CITY)  
 Nels Nelson (1808-) FROM Amherst  
 k Nels Nelson (1Jan1785-) FROM Jefferson  
 NwKn NewKent (1654-) FROM York, [JamesCity]  
 NwNf NewNorfolk (1636-1637) FROM ElizabethCity TO UpperNorfolk + LowerNorfolk  
 NwNwC NewportNews (CITY) (1958-) FROM Warwick (CITY)  
 w Nich Nicholas (30Jan1818-) FROM Greenbrier + Kanawha + Randolph  
 Norf Norfolk (16May1691-1936) FROM LowerNorfolk TO Chesapeake (CITY)  
 NorfC Norfolk (CITY) (1736:1761?-)  
 Namp Northampton (1642-) FROM Accomack  
 Numb Northumberland (Oct1648: Feb1645)-)  
 NortC Norton (CITY) (1954-) WITHIN Wise  
 Nott Nottoway (1May1789-) FROM Amelia  
 w Ohio Ohio (9Nov1776-) FROM West Augusta District, [Yohogania]  
 Oran Orange (20Sep1734:21Jan1734-) FROM Spotsylvania  
 Page Page (30Mar1831-) FROM Rockingham + Shenandoah  
 Patr Patrick (1Jun1791-) FROM Henry  
 w Pend Pendleton (1May1788-) FROM Augusta + Hardy + Rockingham, [Bath]  
 PeteC Petersburg (CITY) (1850: 1784-) ADJACENT Chesterfield + Dinwiddie + PrinceGeorge  
 Pitt Pittsylvania (1Jun1767-) FROM Halifax  
 w Plea Pleasants (29Mar1851-) FROM Wood + Tyler + Ritchie  
 w Poca Pocahontas (21Dec1821-) FROM Bath + Pendleton + Randolph, [Greenbrier]  
 PoquC Poquoson (CITY) (1976-) WITHIN York  
 Powh Powhatan (1Jul1777-) FROM Cumberland, [Chesterfield]

w Pres Preston (19Jan1818-) FROM Monongalia, [Randolph]  
PrEd PrinceEdward (1Jan1754-) FROM Amelia  
PrGr PrinceGeorge (23Apr1703-) FROM CharlesCity  
PrWl PrinceWilliam (25Mar1731-) FROM Stafford + KingGeorge  
PrAn PrincessAnne (16May1691-1Jan1963) FROM LowerNorfolk TO VirginiaBeach (CITY)  
Pula Pulaski (30Mar1839-) FROM Montgomery + Wythe  
w Putn Putnam (11Mar1848-) FROM Kanawha + Cabell + Mason  
w Rale Raleigh (23Jan1850-) FROM Fayette  
RadfC Radford (CITY) (1892-) WITHIN Montgomery  
w Rand Randolph (1May1787-) FROM Harrison  
RappO Rappahannock (Dec1656:11Dec1656-1692) FROM Lancaster TO Essex + Richmond  
Rapp Rappahannock (18Feb1833-) FROM Culpeper  
Rich Richmond (26Apr1692-) FROM (Old)Rappahannock  
RichC Richmond (CITY) (1782-) ADJACENT Chesterfield + Henrico  
the current Virginia capital & seat of Henrico  
w Ritc Ritchie (18Feb1843-) FROM Harrison + Lewis + Wood  
RoanC Roanoke (CITY) (1884-) WITHIN Roanoke  
Roan Roanoke (30Mar1838:1838-) FROM Botetourt, [Montgomery]  
w Roan Roane (11Mar1856-) FROM Kanawha + Jackson + Gilmer  
Rckb Rockbridge (1Mar1778:27Apr1778-) FROM Augusta + Botetourt  
Rckn Rockingham (1Mar1778-) FROM Augusta  
Russ Russell (1May1786-) FROM Washington  
SaleC Salem (CITY) (1968-) WITHIN (and seat of) Roanoke  
Scot Scott (24Nov1814-) FROM Lee + Russell + Washington  
Shen Shenandoah (15May1772:26May1772-) RENAMED from Dunmore 1Feb1778 FROM Frederick  
Smyt Smyth (23Feb1832-) FROM Washington + Wythe  
SBstC SouthBoston (CITY) (1960-) WITHIN Halifax  
SNrfC SouthNorfolk (CITY) (1921-1Jan1963) TO Chesapeake (CITY)  
Samp Southampton (21May1749-) FROM IsleOfWight, [Nansemond-1786]  
Spot Spotsylvania (1May1721-) FROM Essex + KingWilliam + King&Queen  
Staf Stafford (:27May1664-) FROM Westmoreland  
StauC Staunton (CITY) (1871-) WITHIN (and seat of) Augusta  
SuffC Suffolk (CITY) (1910:1866-) FROM Nansemond (CITY) 1974  
Surr Surry (1652?:Apr1652-) FROM JamesCity  
Suss Sussex (1Feb1754-) FROM Surry  
w Tayl Taylor (19Jan1844-) FROM Harrison + Barbour + Marion  
Taze Tazewell (20Dec1799-) FROM Wythe + Russell, [Washington, Logan, Russell]  
w Tuck Tucker (7Mar1856-) FROM Randolph  
w Tyle Tyler (3Dec1814-) FROM Ohio  
UNrf UpperNorfolk (1637-Mar1645/6) RENAMED Nansemond FROM NewNorfolk  
w Upsh Upshur (27Mar1851-) FROM Randolph + Barbour + Lewis  
VrBcC VirginiaBeach (CITY) (1952-) FROM PrincessAnne 1Jan1963  
Wrrn Warren (9Mar1836-) FROM Shenandoah + Fredericksburg  
Wrrs Warroquoake(SHIRE) (1634-1637) RENAMED IsleOfWight  
Warw Warwick (1642/3-1952) RENAMED FROM WarwickRiver (SHIRE) TO Warwick (CITY)  
WrRv WarwickRiver (SHIRE) (1634-1642/3) RENAMED Warwick  
WarwC Warwick (CITY) (16Jul1952-1Jul1958) FROM Warwick TO NewportNews (CITY)  
Wash Washington (1Jan1777-) FROM Fincastle, [Montgomery]  
w Wayn Wayne (18Jan1842-) FROM Cabell  
WaynC Waynesboro (CITY) (31Dec1947-) WITHIN Augusta  
w Webs Webster (10Jan1860-) FROM Nicholas + Braxton + Randolph  
Wmor Westmoreland (Jul1653-) FROM Northumberland, [KingGeorge]  
w Wetz Wetzell (10Jan1846-) FROM Tyler  
WillC Williamsburg (CITY) (1722:1854-) VA capital 1699-1780 ADJACENT York, JamesCity  
the original Virginia capital  
WincC Winchester (CITY) (1874-) WITHIN (and seat of) Frederick  
w Wirt Wirt (19Jan1848-) FROM Wood + Jackson  
Wise Wise (16Feb1856-) FROM Lee + Scott + Russell  
w Wood Wood (22Dec1798-) FROM Harrison, [Kanawha]  
k Wood Woodford (1May1789-) FROM Fayette  
w Wyom Wyoming (26Jan1850-) FROM Logan  
Wyth Wythe (1May1790-) FROM Montgomery, [Grayson]  
Yoho Yohogania (9Nov1776-1786) FROM West Augusta District TO OhioVA + PA  
York York (1642/3-) RENAMED FROM CharlesRiver

**VIRGINIA ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS**

**AugDW West Augusta (1775-6Nov1776)) COMPRISING Augusta West of the Alleghanies**

Came into being informally during the Revolutionary crisis, though its representatives were seated by the VA legislature. The term continued in popular use for a few years after this unofficial “district” was resolved into the Counties of Monongalia, Ohio, Yohogania.

**KenD Kentucky (1Aug1782-1Jun1792 (STATEHOOD)) COMPRISING Jefferson, Fayette, Lincoln**

In 1779, “An act for adjusting and settling the titles of claimers to unpatented lands under the present and former government, previous to the establishment of the Commonwealth’s Land Office” nominated Kentucky a district. Subsequent acts of the House of Delegates further defined the VA territory’s prerogatives and guided it toward statehood.

## SOURCES

Carol McGinnis, *Virginia Genealogy: Sources and Resources* (BaltimoreMD: GPC, 1993)

Morgan P. Robinson, *Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation* (1916; reprint BaltimoreMD: GPC, 1992)

[\*Hening's Statutes\*](#), and actual earliest county record books

Modern courthouse addresses & telephone#s are available [here](#).

My principal source here is Robinson, who lists all the counties, and cites, for each cession of territory from one jurisdiction to another, all the official or semi-official sources for the enabling acts. The principal source for the pre-1793 counties is *Hening's statutes at large : being a collection of all the laws of Virginia, from the first session of the Legislature in the year 1619*, which records the text of the acts organized chronologically by the session in which they were introduced. The majority of these acts specify the exact date on which a new county is to formally come into existence, but Robinson lists instead the date the legislation was actually enacted by the Virginia House of Burgesses, or later the Virginia Assembly. Since I am interested here in determining the actual period of existence for each jurisdiction, because it is this period that defines the outside envelope within which records may have been created, I have looked up all the acts in Hening's to determine, where provided, the actual dates specified for the county's erection. Where no such dates are specified, I have used the date of legislative enactment provided by Robinson as the actual date of erection. These latter dates are all based on references to the official Journal of the Virginia House of Burgesses, and I have examined several of these references to verify that the dates listed in Robinson actually were dates of enactment.

For the period after 1793, the acts of Virginia were published by Shepherd's as *The statutes at large of Virginia, from October session 1792, to December session 1806 [i.e. 1807], inclusive, in three volumes, (new series,) being a continuation of Hening ...*, and Robinson provides citations to these acts as well, and also to a publication identified only as *Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia*, which seems to be the main source for partial cessions of territory that took place during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beyond. Since my research interests lie primarily in the counties created during the colonial era, I have not pursued these additional references any further.

Where known, largely from my own perusal of the original county record books, I have supplemented the county birth date, with the specific date of the first court session or other first records of the county. McGinnis provides year dates for the start of the principal early records series of each county, and the reader is referred to her publication for that information. My focus here is merely to define the jurisdictional envelope for each county, and I will be adding more specific earliest records dates to this list as I encounter them in my research.

There are many sources for the VA county genealogies (the names of the parent counties), but none that I am aware of which provides specific citations to the legislation for partial cessions between pre-existing counties, besides Robinson. These references are valuable, not only for the dates of such cessions, but for the boundaries defined in the legislation. Because my intent here was to restrict the jurisdictional information to a single line, to facilitate scanning of the list, I have included only the names of the additional contributing counties that are to be found from many sources, and only occasionally supplemented these by the dates. Robinson becomes an invaluable reference for any project that seeks to determine the specifics of the often-shifting boundaries of many Virginia counties. Also found in Robinson are convenient genealogical trees of descent from principal ur-counties, as well as a dozen or so maps focusing on the tidewater settlements from 1607-1671, although one may need a magnifying glass to read the tiny print. Robinson's compilation was in turn based on the archival work of LVA librarian Earl G. Swem, who published a "Bibliography of Virginia" in the Virginia State Library Bulletin 8(Apr-Oct1915), and he includes in an appendix the text of a number of county erection bills that are not to be found in Hening's, but for which Swem recovered copies from the London Public Records Office.

Finally, I have also consulted McGinnis in a few of instances where the jurisdictional genealogy indicated by Robinson is unclear, and for the birth dates of all the independent cities, which Robinson does not cover at all.